(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

(11) EP 1 310 926 A3

(12) EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(88) Date of publication A3:
21.04.2004 Bulletin 2004/17

(43) Date of publication A2:
14.05.2003 Bulletin 2003/20

(21) Application number: **02256234.2**

(22) Date of filing: **09.09.2002**

(51) Int Cl.[7]: **G07F 17/32**, G07F 17/38, A63F 3/00, G07D 5/00, A63F 9/00

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC NL PT SE SK TR
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

(30) Priority: **07.09.2001 GB 0121651**
05.10.2001 GB 0123950
23.10.2001 GB 0125411
31.10.2001 GB 0126096
09.11.2001 GB 0126933
14.12.2001 GB 0129903
26.04.2002 GB 0209548

(71) Applicant: **Bell-Fruit Games Limited**
Nottingham NG7 2LX (GB)

(72) Inventors:
- **Wilson, Richard**
  Newark, Notts NG24 3SP (GB)
- **Griffiths, Ian**
  Newark, Notts NG23 5NY (GB)
- **Wain, John Laurence**
  Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8 6HA (GB)

(74) Representative: **Gosnall, Toby**
Barker Brettell,
138 Hagley Road,
Edgbaston
Birmingham B16 9PW (GB)

(54) An entertainment machine

(57) An entertainment machine (100), for example a pusher-type entertainment machine, is provided with one or more special features. These special features may be taken from the following examples: using in the machine (100) a playing piece (40, 40i, 700, 800) for which higher awards are made when compared to other playing pieces (40, 40i, 700, 800); using in the machine (100) playing pieces (40, 40i, 700, 800) of variable appearance; using in the machine(100) playing pieces (40, 40i, 700, 800) which may be locatable within the machine(100); providing the machine (100) with a mechanism to detect when it may be unattractive to the prospective players thereof and a mechanism to allow it to introduce further playing pieces into the field (2) of play at that time; providing the machine (100) with a payout controlling mechanism, which may be arranged to keep the percentage payout of the machine within predetermined limits; providing a prize dispenser arranged to dispense non-monetary prizes.

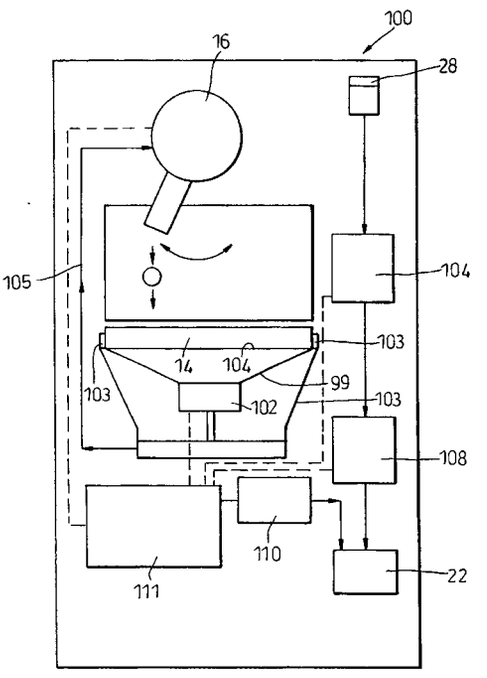


Fig. 1

EP 1 310 926 A3

European Patent Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 25 6234

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
X Y	EP 0 767 447 A (CROMPTONS LEISURE MACH LTD) 9 April 1997 (1997-04-09) * abstract * * column 2, line 13 - column 3, line 2 * * column 3, line 15 - column 4, line 39 *	1-9 31,32	G07F17/32 G07F17/38 A63F3/00 G07D5/00 A63F9/00
X Y	EP 0 755 033 A (CROMPTONS LEISURE MACH LTD) 22 January 1997 (1997-01-22) * column 2, line 50 - column 3, line 8 * * column 3, line 45 - column 4, line 1 * * column 4, line 40 - line 56; figures 1-4 *	1,30,34, 35,39-42 31,32	
X	EP 0 964 373 A (KONAMI CO LTD) 15 December 1999 (1999-12-15) * column 1, line 35 - line 45 * * paragraph [0009] - paragraph [0012] * * paragraph [0023] * * paragraph [0025] * * paragraph [0056] * * claims 1-3 *	1,30	
A	GB 2 250 368 A (LEVY HAROLD JOHN) 3 June 1992 (1992-06-03) * abstract * * figures 1-3 *	1,30	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) G07F A63F G07D

~~The present search report has been drawn up for all claims~~

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich	5 December 2003	Lavin Liermo, J

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

X : particularly relevant if taken alone
Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category
A : technological background
O : non-written disclosure
P : intermediate document

T : theory or principle underlying the invention
E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date
D : document cited in the application
L : document cited for other reasons

& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

European Patent Office

Application Number
EP 02 25 6234

CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

[X] Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

1-10,30-42

[ ] No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

[ ] All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

[ ] As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

[ ] Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

[X] None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

1-9,30-42

European Patent Office

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B

Application Number
EP 02 25 6234

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-9,30-42

Processing of the playing pieces

---

2. claim: 10

increase the contrast of the playing pieces within the game machine

---

ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO. EP 02 25 6234

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

05-12-2003

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 0767447 A	09-04-1997	GB 2305866 A	23-04-1997
		EP 0767447 A2	09-04-1997
EP 0755033 A	22-01-1997	DE 69625288 D1	23-01-2003
		EP 0755033 A1	22-01-1997
		ES 2188724 T3	01-07-2003
		GB 2303309 A ,B	19-02-1997
		US 5752699 A	19-05-1998
EP 0964373 A	15-12-1999	JP 2901968 B2	07-06-1999
		JP 2000000372 A	07-01-2000
		CN 1239004 A ,B	22-12-1999
		EP 0964373 A2	15-12-1999
		TW 385254 B	21-03-2000
GB 2250368 A	03-06-1992	NONE	

EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82